

New York University News Bureau

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For Release: To A.M.'s of Sunday, March 1, 1970
(Mailed 2/26/70)

Even the most liberal whites still lag far behind the most conservative segment of the black community in their feelings about the rate of speed at which integration should proceed, Dr. John Spiegel, director of the Lemberg Center for the Study of Violence at Brandeis University, told alumni of New York University's Graduate School of Social Work yesterday (Saturday, Feb. 28).

Dr. Spiegel, a distinguished psychiatrist and pioneer investigator of group violence, addressed the awards luncheon meeting of the School's Alumni Association Annual Dean's Day Homecoming, at Loeb Student Center on NYU's Washington Square campus.

In illustrating the kinds of findings the Lemberg Center has made to date, he declared: "We surveyed blacks and whites on whether they think the rate of change towards integration is proceeding too fast, too slow, or just right, and on what they feel the effectiveness of government action has been, both at the local and national level.

"At the conservative pole of the black group the attitudes are far more liberal than at the most liberal pole of the white group. The gulf is huge. There is no overlap," he observed.

Dr. Spiegel described the theoretical approach the Lemberg Center uses and the elements the center -- "and everyone else, laymen and professionals alike," he said -- must consider in studying violence.

The Center deals, he explained, with the value conflicts in our country as a

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whole and the way the value conflicts polarize the black and white community.

It then studies group reaction to these conflicts, which, he said, might be called "parapolitical" (e.g. liberal-conservative and radical-revolutionary).

Finally he and his associates analyze how the parapolitical roles are converted into "riot roles," that is "how they are converted from an attitude to action."

He said he is trying to introduce "intellectual and conceptual systemization into the way people think about civil disorders. There are a great many factors involved, and most of the popular theories -- even the good ones -- are far too simplistic.

"I'm trying to overcome this simplistic approach and show how to think about this complex phenomenon in an orderly and logical fashion, in terms of all its aspects: political, cultural, psychological and sociological."

Dr. Spiegel is the co-author (with Roy R. Grinker) of "War Neuroses" and "Men under Stress," and at the Dean's Day Luncheon, he was presented the Dean's Day Scholar achievement award for his studies of "'Men under Stress' -- whether in the combat of the battlefield or in the riot-torn ghettos of our country."

Six Graduate School of Social Work students also received an unprecedented citation by the School's Alumni Association for "effective social action on behalf of the inmates of the Riker's Island Penitentiary."

In December, the six students sent a four-page letter to prominent public figures, including President Nixon and Governor Rockefeller, describing conditions at the Penitentiary as "deforming rather than reforming" young inmates. Their protest has led to a re-examination of conditions at Riker's Island and commendation from the press.

The six students are Michael F. Bonafanti, Paul Himmel, Edward L. Johnson, Richard Mullen, Gloria Robertshaw and Ashburn Thomas.

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Roland Wolf, now in his third term as alumni president, received the Association's first Lucy Chamberlain Memorial Award for Alumni Service.

Other speakers on the luncheon program were Dr. Ruth Lewis Parkas, chairman of the School's President's Council; Dr. Allan M. Cartter, chancellor and executive vice president of NYU, and Dean Alex Rosen, the School's head, who presented the awards.

The theme of the Dean's Day was "Violence as a Dynamic of Change," and Dean Rosen had opened the day-long session with a talk on "My Perception of Social Work Behavior when Confronted by Community Violence."

This was followed by four concurrent seminars on violence and change; nonviolence and change; politics, economics and change, and social work and change.

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